

IOWA BIRD LIFE

Winter 1989 Volume 59 Number 1



IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

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FRONT COVER: Pomarine Jaeger, Saylorville Reservoir, 30 September 1988.
Photo by Steve Dinsmore.

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The IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. *Iowa Bird Life* and *I.O.U. News* are quarterly publications of the Union.

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INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other materials relating to birds and bird finding in Iowa should be sent to the editor. Accepted manuscripts will generally be published promptly, depending on space available, with the following absolute deadlines: 15 November for the Winter issue; 15 February for the Spring issue; 15 May for the Summer issue; and 15 July for the Fall issue. Most manuscripts will be refereed. All material should be typed double-spaced or hand printed in ink on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper. Authors should pattern their style after a current issue of the journal. If you want more detailed guidelines or advice regarding the appropriateness of your topic for *Iowa Bird Life*, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the editor.

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*19-21 May 1989, Davenport

FIELD REPORTS

Anyone observing birds in Iowa is encouraged to report their findings on a quarterly basis to the Field Reports editors. Sample reporting and documentation forms suitable for duplication are available from the editor (send self-addressed stamped envelope to T. H. Kent, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246). An article describing the reporting process is also available.

Deadlines for receipt of field reports are as follows:

- *Winter (Dec, Jan, Feb)—3 March (W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653)
- *Spring (Mar, Apr, May)—3 June (Stephen J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50010)
- *Summer (Jun, Jul)—3 August (James J. Dinsmore, 4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50010)
- *Fall (Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov)—3 December (Carl J. Bendorf, 825 7th Ave, Iowa City, IA 52240)

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

*Deadline for receipt of reports: 15 January. For forms and instructions write: W. Ross Silcock, Box 300, Tabor, IA 51653.

IOWA BIRDLINE 319-338-9881

The birdline is a recorded summary of interesting recent bird sightings in Iowa. At the end of the report you can leave a message and report recent sightings. Be sure to give your name and phone number as well as the location of the bird and date seen. Call in as soon as possible after sighting a rare bird. Jim Fuller checks the reports daily and updates the recording on Monday, so make sure Sunday sightings are reported by Sunday night.

I.O.U. NEWS

Send items of interest for the newsletter to the editors (J. Hank and Linda Zaletel, 715 West St., Colo, IA 50056).

MATERIALS AVAILABLE

The following materials may be obtained by writing the editorial office (Iowa Bird Life, 211 Richards St., Iowa City, IA 52246):

- *Order form for back issues of *Iowa Bird Life*: send self-addressed stamped envelope.
- *Field Checklist of Iowa Birds—1987 Edition: 10 for \$1.65, 25 for \$3.50, 100 for \$11.60, postpaid.
Also available at annual meetings for \$0.10 each.

REPORTING NEBRASKA BIRDS

Sightings of Nebraska birds, including those within the Nebraska portion of De Soto N.W.R., should be reported to Loren and Babs Padelford, 1405 Little John Road, Bellevue, NE 68005. Formats for reporting and documentation are the same as for Iowa.

ADDRESS CHANGES

Please send address changes/corrections to Francis Moore, 336 Fairfield St., Waterloo, IA 50703.

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MEET AN IOWA ORNITHOLOGIST: MARY ROBERTS MUSGROVE

HANK ZALETEL

Does birding run in a family? For Mary Roberts Musgrove of Des Moines, the answer would be yes. Her parents, Mary Price and Dr. Frank Roberts, were pioneer members of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. Mary was born April 30, 1916 in Des Moines while her father was an osteopathic student. After his graduation in 1918, they moved to Spirit Lake where he set up his practice. Her earliest birding memories date from the 1920s and include helping her father with nesting studies of Killdeer and Spotted Sandpiper. She received a Reed field guide when she was 8 or 9. She remembers taking extensive field notes on a bird perched on a wire outside her home. She rushed into the house and compared her notes with the field guide and found that they didn't match any bird. Her mother then explained to her that very few people actually see the red streak on the crown of an Eastern Kingbird.

In 1929 her father sold his practice and began studying entomology at Iowa State University. They lived in Ames from 1929 to 1930, and it was during this time her father was editor of the *I.O.U. Bulletin*. She recalls that its publication was a family affair. Everyone pitched in to help proofread and stuff mailing envelopes.

The family moved to Iowa City in 1931 so that her father could pursue his medical degree. She attended high school in Iowa City and graduated in 1934. While at school, she met her future husband Jack. They both attended the University of Iowa. It was in late 1936 or early 1937 that they began taking drawing materials to the Memorial Union and Jack began to make sketches of ducks. Since most hunters could not identify the birds, it was Jack and Mary's intention to develop a key to birds in the hand, in addition to noting field marks, bird calls, and fall and eclipse plumages. By 1938 they had produced a 25-35 page booklet but had no publisher or artwork that they felt would do justice to the work.

Mary graduated from the University in 1938 with a degree in General Science and soon started teaching in Springdale. Jack was soon offered a job at the State Historical Museum in Des Moines. For two years they traveled long distances to see each other until they were married in June 1940.

During the summers of 1938-1940 both Jack and Mary worked at the National School of Wildlife Protection in McGregor. Jack taught classes on



bird study and they both led birding trips with Jack leading the advanced students and Mary following with the novices.

In late 1940, Jack and Ken Colton, editor of the *Annals of Iowa*, found material in the museum relating to bird life in Iowa in the 1800s. With Jack dictating, Mary typing and rewriting, and Ken editing, they published "Birds of Iowa in Pioneer Days" in the January 1941 issue of the *Annals of Iowa*.

In the fall of 1940 a young man from Earlham came to the museum and asked permission to paint pictures of the birds in the museum cases. The quality of his work was soon evident and he was hired as Jack's assistant in the summer of 1941. His name was Maynard Reese.

The couple now had an artist for their completed manuscript. The state printing board, however, would not permit Mary's name to be on the publication because she was not a state employee. The trio said fine; all the work had been done on their own time and they would find a different publisher. They had the state over a barrel, because the plates had already been produced. The authors, however, were disappointed at the quality of the plates because the work was done for the lowest bid. After much discussion, the state relented and allowed Mary's name on the work. *Waterfowl in Iowa* was published in 1943.

In subsequent editions, only minor corrections were made. Mary completely rewrote the fifth edition during 1976, updating it from current ornithological literature. The work was completed in early 1977. More than 80,000 copies of the five editions have been printed. Since the fifth edition would be the last by these authors, the original art was returned to Maynard Reese.

In October 1942 their only daughter was born. Mary stayed at home caring for their child until 1951 when she returned to work as a clerk at the Iowa Legislature. In 1953, she went to work at the Des Moines Register & Tribune where she remained until her retirement in 1975.

During her years at the paper she worked in the Traffic Department, the library, and at the rewrite desk. While at the last position, she wrote many articles on wildlife and birds for the paper.

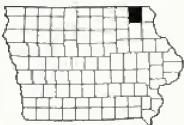
Jack, Mary's husband, died in his sleep in 1980. Her daughter continues the family tradition and is an avid birder. Mary continues to be an active birder. If you should see a mini-van with a birder and small white dog, you've probably found Mary. Stop and chat. You'll be glad that you did.

715 West St., Colo, IA 50056.

CANADA GOOSE NEST RECORDS IN WINNESHEIK COUNTY

METTE J. HANSON AND TEX A. SORDAHL

In Iowa in the 1800s, cited records of Lewis and Clark and others show that the Giant Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis maxima*) nested commonly along the Missouri River, in the Spirit Lake area, and in Winnebago and Hancock counties (Anderson 1907); it also nested along the Mississippi River (Cooke 1906). Because of unrestricted hunting and loss of habitat, the Giant Canada Goose was extirpated from Iowa by 1906 (R. Howing, personal communication cited in Nigus and Dinsmore 1980). Bishop (1978) implied a slightly later date.



The Giant Canada Goose has since been successfully reestablished in Iowa, beginning with 16 pairs brought to Emmet County from Minnesota in 1964 (Bishop and Howing 1972). By 1982 Canada Geese had nested in 11 Iowa counties, primarily in northwest and northcentral Iowa (Dinsmore et al. 1984). In 1988, 28 geese were released in northeast Iowa at Cardinal Marsh, Winnesheik County (J. A. Ripple personal communication).

To our knowledge, there have been no Giant Canada Goose nests in Winnesheik County until recently. In both 1986 and 1987, a Canada Goose brood was produced at a nest in southern Winnesheik County (*Iowa Bird Life* 56:114, M. Dietzenbach personal communication). Below we report three additional records of nesting pairs in Winnesheik County.

Two farm ponds each recently had a nesting pair; one pond had nests in 1986 through 1988, and the second pond had a nest in 1988. In 1988, both pairs raised young to flight stage (unpublished Iowa Department of Natural Resources reports, J. A. Ripple personal communication).

On 3 May 1988, M. J. Hanson found a Canada Goose nest by Birge Pond on Luther College's Hoslett Field Study Area. Located one mile north of Decorah, Birge Pond is a 1.2-hectare, 4-meter-deep "borrow" pit surrounded on all sides by trees; it lies within 20 meters of the Upper Iowa River. The nest was located about one meter above the water line on a small peninsula. It contained 6 eggs and was defended by 2 adults. The incubating bird put up a formidable threat display when approached. The fate of this nest is uncertain. Approximately 3 weeks after it was discovered, R. M. Knutson found it to be disturbed and observed 2 large broken eggshells. On 28 May, when Sordahl visited the pond, no adults or young were present. When we examined the nest on 27 June, it contained many 1-5 cm shell fragments and a few dried membranes. It seems likely that this nest was depredated. A study of predation on artificial ground nests containing chicken eggs conducted by S. E. Benjamin in May at the same study site found nearly 100 percent predation within a week (mostly by mammals), lending support to this conclusion.

The Giant Canada Goose was at one time considered extinct, but was rediscovered in 1962 at Rochester, Minnesota (Hanson 1965). It subsequently has responded well to management and is expanding through its native range in northcentral United States (Bellrose 1976). It is also expanding its range in Iowa (Dinsmore et al. 1984). The nests we report here for Win-

neshiek County document nesting in a part of northeast Iowa where the species may not have nested historically.

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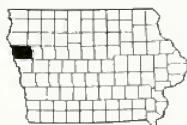


Canada Goose, Diamond Lake, June 1980. Photo by Carl Bendorf.

BARRED OWL RESPONSES TO TAPES AT STONE PARK

DOUGLAS E. TRAPP

Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) is a common permanent resident in Iowa. Little data has been gathered on Barred Owl behavior in Iowa, possibly due to its illusive nature. They can be found in "old growth" forest near rivers, streams and ponds. Locating Barred Owl in such areas may prove difficult, however, as they are nocturnal. Since Barred Owls vocalize quite readily, they may be located and observed by listening for their voices. Voice imitations and tape recordings may be used to excite the birds.



On 18 June 1988, three of us (myself, Kevin Loftus, and Tim Loftus) began a study of the behavior of Barred Owls at Stone Park in Sioux City, Iowa, through the use of taped Barred Owl vocalizations. Locating the proper habitat was not a difficult task as Stone Park is thickly wooded throughout, and possesses a small pond area surrounded by old growth forest. A tape recording of Barred Owl voices (Voices of New World Nightbirds, ARA Recordings) was played from a small boat ramp at the pond edge at 9:30 p.m.; the first response from a Barred Owl was noted 2 minutes later. The tape was played continuously until 11:30 p.m. The owl remained near our calling location, vocalizing the entire time while flying to and from various perch locations at the pond edge. A second Barred Owl was heard vocalizing repeatedly from the opposite side of the pond as well. Throughout the summer months, during weekend visits (18, 19, 25, and 26 June; 2, 9, 10, 17, 30, and 31 July; 6, 7, 13, 20, 21, 27, and 28 August 1988), I studied the Barred Owls at the pond location (with Kevin Loftus on 2 and 17 June and 30 July; with Tim Loftus on 10 June and 7 August). We were occasionally joined by visitors to the park whose curiosity was aroused.

Observation periods began with the use of the same calling tape and covered about the same hours as on 18 June. Upon locating a vocalizing Barred Owl, a flashlight was used to observe its behavior. The owls paid no attention to the light. Apparently the owls' behaviors were not altered by the light, because some behaviors were observed on moonlit nights without a flashlight, and the behavior remained constant. During June and July the owls were studied at the original location near the boat ramp. On 13, 20, 21, 27, and 28 August, the owls were studied in an area closer to the parking lot entrance to the pond. The Barred Owls response to the tape was quicker and more frequent at the second site, usually taking no longer than 5 minutes.

One Barred Owl, dubbed "The Hooter" due to its hooting announcement upon arrival to the calling site, was always first to arrive, and lit on a dead snag above the calling location and vocalized with its head directed away (one quarter turn) from the tape source. Its initial call was that of "Hoo-Hoo-Hoo-Hoo-Hoo-Hooahhhhhh" but varied from a few hoots to a sometimes simple "Hoo-Hooooooaahhhhhh". The behavior of the first owl appeared to be of a cautious nature as it would always perch nearly 30 feet high, and would not remain in one location for more than 5 minutes. A second owl would alight not far from the tape location, but would not vocalize immediately. Rather, it would sit quietly and listen to the tape and the other owl,

frequently turning its head to the sound source. After a few minutes of listening, the second owl would let out an eerie scream which I describe as "whooooooooooooooooooooaaaahhhhhhhhhh", quite drawn out and high in pitch. The first owl responded to this strange vocalization by a series of hollow guttural blasts of "waka-waka-waka-wak-wak-wak" tapering off to silence. This excited the second owl more as it would scream again. These screams of the second owl were emitted about once every 30 seconds. The "waka-waka" calls of the first owl were repeated nearly every time the second owl would scream. The combination of the two birds vocalizing this way resembled nothing I or the other observers had ever witnessed. Some of the visitors commented that these voices resembled monkey calls. After about 15 minutes, both birds would stop vocalizing, and it would usually be about 10 minutes before the first owl would begin calling again in response to the continuously played tape, the whole act then being repeated by both birds. These behaviors continued throughout the observation periods.

Although the literature (Bent 1937, Craighead and Craighead 1956, Eckert 1974) mentions Barred Owl as possessing many different voices, little is said about what these vocalizations may mean. From my observations it appears that the vocalizations are defensive in nature, although no aggressive behavior by the two owls was noted. The response to the tape by the first owl by vocalizing at a quarter angle to the sound source indicates the owl's effort to confuse a potential enemy by throwing its voice. This could cause an intruder to search for the owl somewhere beyond the real location. The intruder, so located in flight or perched by the territory holder, could then be attacked from behind and thwarted off.

Taped vocalizations of Barred Owl were a useful tool for this study. They should be found useful to others interested in studying owls. Before the use of tape recorders there were only two ways to imitate an owl's voice—the human voice or wooden predator calls such as those used to call wild turkeys. Tapes can be made to play from 30 to 90 minutes long on one side, thus saving the human voice for later discussions. Owl tapes can also be useful during Christmas Bird Counts. For instance, I found only 4 Barred Owl sightings listed in the Iowa Christmas Bird Count reports for 1930, 19 for 1954, 63 for 1979, 61 for 1981, and 122 for 1986. Mention was made for the 1979 and 1981 counts that owl tapes were used these years, and they probably were not popular for surveys before then. It is likely that Christmas Count numbers, as well as general sightings of these owls, would greatly increase if owl tapes were commonly used.

I found no evidence that the use of owl calling tapes is detrimental to the Barred Owls. I was unable to locate any literature citing attacks of one owl species on another resulting from the use of owl tapes.

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3229 Lindenwood Street, Sioux City, IA 51104

IN MEMORIAM: WARREN N. KECK

ROBERT F. VANE

Warren N. Keck of Keosauqua, a past-president of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union and its first Life Member, died on 14 November 1988 at age 88. Dr. Keck was born on 11 November 1900 at Utica, Iowa. He received his undergraduate and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Iowa in the 1920s. He is affectionately remembered by those who knew him while he was Professor of Biology at Coe College in Cedar Rapids from 1936 to 1947. His special interest in ornithology led him to join the Cedar Rapids Bird Club which met at Coe's Science Hall. The Cedar Rapids Bird Club, formed in 1929, was one of the predecessors of the present day Cedar Rapids Audubon Society. Dr. Keck served as the sponsor of the club from Coe College and was president from 1938 to 1940 and 1942 to 1943. At the club's monthly meetings, he often displayed trays of bird skins from Coe's large collection. He guided discussions and was always present to answer questions and resolve issues. He was an excellent birder and participated actively in the club's field trips. He was president of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union from 1940 to 1942 and an active member of the Iowa Academy of Sciences.

In 1942, he accepted a professorship at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois. While there, he was active in the Chicago Ornithological Society. In 1955, I had the pleasure of accompanying Dr. Keck's group on one of their annual field trips to Morocco, Indiana, to see prairie chickens. Last summer he was selected as one of the ten best teachers that ever taught at North Central College. Now, the college has established the Dr. Warren N. Keck Scholarship for an outstanding junior student majoring in biology.

Warren Keck was a continual student, well versed in a host of subjects in addition to natural history. For many years after retiring from teaching, he spent winters in Chicago where he followed his interests in art, music, and antiques. He traveled extensively. Through the years he kept the family home in Keosauqua and retired there in 1978 to conduct an antique business, specializing in glassware. He was considered an authority on Iowa City pressed glass. He had a comprehensive ornithological library and a fine art collection. A visit to his home was always a pleasant occasion. As a bachelor, he was an excellent cook and enjoyed setting a beautiful table. Dr. Keck had an enthusiastic, kindly approach to students and friends alike. He had so much to share, which he did with a teacher's generosity.

2220 Grande Ave., Cedar Rapids, IA 52403

FIELD REPORTS—FALL 1988

CARL J. BENDORF

WEATHER

After the hottest summer since 1936, August continued this trend through the 26th and ended up the 7th hottest August in 116 years of record keeping. Rainfall was slightly above normal, the first month of 1988 to be above average. However, over half the month's precipitation occurred in a 24-hour period on 21-22 August when a large thunderstorm system moved southeastward across the state.



September temperatures fluctuated greatly with record low readings in the 30s on the 6th, followed by a number of highs well into the 90s on the 10th and 17th. Precipitation amounts also varied widely across the state.

October turned out to be the 7th coldest and 8th driest on record. The first freeze was on the 3rd in parts of N Iowa and most of the state felt frost by the 6th.

November averaged only slightly warmer than usual, but this was the first month in nearly a year with well above average precipitation. November was a relatively stormy month with wind speeds averaging 11% above normal and cloudiness 5% greater than normal. Three of the four windiest days of 1988 occurred on the 5th, 16th, and 27th with each day's average wind speed between 23.5 and 23.8 mph across the state.

	Mean Temperature and Precipitation with Deviation from Normal	
	Temperature, °F Mean (Deviation)	Precipitation, inches Mean (Deviation)
August	76.5 (+4.4)	4.20 (+0.10)
September	65.4 (+1.9)	3.60 (+0.18)
October	46.6 (-6.1)	0.66 (-1.64)
November	37.9 (+0.7)	2.68 (1.17)

GENERAL TRENDS

As you read the species summaries, you may note several trends. The most apparent were weather related. First, the mini-wave of frigatebird sightings at the end of September and early October came in the aftermath of intense weather activity in the Gulf of Mexico. These birds were seen about 10 days after Hurricane Gilbert slammed into the Mexican coast, but they were only seen for a day or two before disappearing. The second noticeable burst of activity was the number of strong-flying migrants that were detected during the period of 27 September to 1 October. These included the jaegers and Red Phalarope at Saylorville and many of the peak reports of hawks and falcons. These movements appeared to be related to the passage of a very strong weather system out of the Northwest.

Most of the thrushes apparently migrated through without stopping in Iowa as few were reported. After the number of very early warbler records, almost none of the warblers were found later in significant numbers and there were no reports approaching record late dates. Many of the sparrows also were reported early this year. Winter finches were practically absent.

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

An amazing 16 accidental species were reported (plus Jaeger species) during the period: Red-throated Loon, Pacific Loon, Yellow-billed Loon, Magnificent Frigatebird, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Trumpeter Swan, Red Knot, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Red Phalarope, Jaeger Species, Pomarine Jaeger, Parasitic Jaeger, Little Gull, Thayer's Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Sabine's Gull, and Rock Wren. Six of these species are potential additions to the state list. Casual species reported included Red-necked Grebe, Ibis species, Black Scoter, Surf Scoter, Black-legged Kittiwake, Burrowing Owl, and House Finch. Ringed Turtle-Dove was the only exotic species reported.

SPECIES DATA

* = documented; record early/late dates are given in [].

Red-throated Loon: One report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Pacific Loon: One report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Common Loon: 1 summered at Rathbun Res. (Marty Eby fide SD); another was at Clear L. on 26 Aug (Effie Humburg fide JLH). The peak was 81 on 29 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SD).

Yellow-billed Loon: One report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Pied-billed Grebe: Not widely reported. At Saylorville Res., 15 were present on 29 Sep and 1 lingered to 20 Nov (THK).

Horned Grebe: Peak was 28 on 29 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SD).

Red-necked Grebe: 1 juv. was at Zirbel Sl. on 4 Aug (*JLW), exceeding the previous early record by a month. Another was more expected on 8 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SD details)

Eared Grebe: Reported only from Saylorville Res., with 2 present by 26 Aug (SD) and a peak of 4 on 23 Sep (SD, ASF); last was 1 on 30 Oct (PCP, AB).

Western Grebe: All reports were from Saylorville Res.: 1 on 23 Oct (SD); 4 on 27 Oct (SD); 2 on 30 Oct (PCP, AB); and 1 on 1 Nov (AJ).

American White Pelican: Many stopped in central Iowa. At Union Slough N.W.R., 15 on 23 Aug grew to 1,300 by 8 Sep (MCK). At Ventura M., 300 were seen on 25 Sep (JLH). At Saylorville Res., 18 on 28 Aug were late arriving (SD); 3,900 were reported on 15 Sep (SD) and 2,000 on 18 Sep (PCP, MLP); on 24 Sep three different counts were 2,500 (MT), 6,100 (BEn), and 11,000 (SD); 10,000 were still here on 1 Oct (SD); by 3 Oct only 500 were reported (THK); 132 were present on 27 Oct (SD); and the last 1 was seen on 1 Nov (AJ, SD). At other locations no more than 2 birds were reported, with the last on 25 Nov at Riverton A. (SD). This species made up for tardiness at Saylorville Res. with quantities (attracted by exposed mud flats) that illustrate the difficulties in counting large numbers.

Double-crested Cormorant: Peak counts at reservoirs were 75 on 24 Sep at Coralville (THK); 2,250 on 1 Oct at Saylorville (SD, MPr, BPr); and 21 on 14 Nov at Red Rock (AJ); 1 was still at Coralville Res. on 30 Nov (CJB, THK).

Magnificent Frigatebird: Hurricane Gilbert scattered frigatebirds throughout the Midwest in late Sep and early Oct and on 25-26 Sep, 1 female bird was gliding over Clear L. and seen by many (*JLW, *JJD, *SD, *MPr, *BPr, *PCP, *JF, *MT, *THK photos, AWH photos). Another female was found at Red Rock Res. on 2 Oct (*DLD), and on 3 Oct an all dark male with a visible red throat patch was seen at the same location (*DY)! These are the first substantiated records for Iowa.

American Bittern: The only reports were singles on 2 Aug at Lylah's M., Howard Co. (MJH) and 28 Sep in Dickinson Co. (DCH), and 3 on 15 Oct at Riverton A. (SD).

Great Blue Heron: Peaks were 74 on 9 Aug in Clay and Buena Vista counties (MMB), 416 on 17 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, ASF), 162 on 25 Aug at Forney L. (BP, LP), and 40 on 26 Sep at Coralville Res. (THK).

Great Egret: 200 were n of Burlington on 26 Sep (CF). The last was 1 on 22 Oct at Saylorville Res. (BEn).

Snowy Egret: This species was more widespread than usual with 4 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 9 Aug (SD, MPr), 3 in Guthrie Co. on 20 Aug (RKM), 4 in Clay Co. on 25 Aug (MMB), and 4 in Harrison Co. on 2 Sep (JF). The last were 2 in Clay Co. on 5 Sep (JF). E Iowa reports were 2 on 16 Aug and 26 Sep n of Burlington (CF).

Little Blue Heron: The peak was 9 immature birds on 5 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD); last were in mid-Sep in Des Moines Co. (JF). An adult was in Warren Co. on 20 Aug (AJ); other locations were Forney L. (BPa), Colyn A. (SD), and Dan Greene Sl. (JF).

Cattle Egret: The peak was 12 on 7 Sep at Credit Is. (PCP). Between 5 Aug and 21 Nov, 1-3 birds were found in Kossuth, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Poweshiek, and Harrison counties. One at Forney L. insisted on landing among Snow Goose decoys on 23-24 Sep (SD details, BB).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: The peak was 22 on 28 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, JSi).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: One or 2 birds were reported from Kossuth, Des Moines, and Mills counties between 1 and 23 Aug.

Ibis species: 1 was at Union Slough N.W.R. on 17 Aug [2nd earliest] (*Eua/EIA). Additional reports from this location were of single birds on 22 Sep 1983 and 17 Sep 1987 (MCK); 6 were at Forney L. on 25-26 Aug (BP, LP) [3rd earliest]; 1 was at Big Creek L. on 2 Sep (SD details); singles were at Clear L. on 1 Oct (JLH) and Dan Green Sl. on 5 Oct (*MMB).

Black-bellied Whistling Duck: A report will be reviewed by the Records Committee.

Tundra Swan: The only reports of this regular fall migrant were of 2 ad. and 3 imm. at Rathbun Res. on 18 Nov (*DC) and 1 ad. on 21 Nov (THK, FLM) and 4 ad. and 2 imm. on 24 Nov (MCK) at Union Slough N.W.R. Apparently no one visited their traditional staging areas in NE Iowa.

Trumpeter Swan: 1 adult bird was seen and heard at Ingham L. on 21 Nov (*THK). The source of most, if not all, of the sightings in recent years is probably the introduced flock in Minnesota, but the origin of this bird is unknown.

Mute Swan: 1 was reported without details from NC Iowa in August, but will not be cited here because this is not the expected time of year to see vagrants from the established feral populations around the Great Lakes. This was more likely an escaped bird.

Greater White-fronted Goose: Very scarce this year. The only reports were of a small flock on 16 Oct and 60 on 13 Nov at Saylorville Res. (BEn) and 1 on 11 Nov at De Soto N.W.R. (AJ).

Snow Goose: 1 was at Dan Green Sl. on 9 Aug (MMB). The first at Saylorville Res. were 2 on 2 Oct (BEn). The 10,000 birds at Rathbun Res. on 6 Nov (BEn) were a little unusual for C Iowa but 200,000 were not unexpected at Riverton A. in SW Iowa on 25 Nov (SD, BB).

Ross' Goose: The last date for the summering bird at Bays Branch was 16 Oct (SD). At De Soto N.W.R. on 11 Nov, 3 birds (AJ details) and 19 birds (SD) were reported. A single bird was detected among 3,000 Snow Geese at Rathbun Res. on 26 Nov (RLC).

Canada Goose: Large numbers were present in N Iowa with 4,000 in Clay Co. on 8 Oct (MMB) and 5,000 on various frozen lakes in NC Iowa on 20 Nov (THK, FLM).

Wood Duck: 40 were in Guthrie Co. on 10 Sep (RLC).

Green-winged Teal: The first was 1 on 7 Sep at Credit Is. and 40 were there on 11 Nov (PCP); peak was 116 on 20 Nov at Saylorville Res. (BEn).

American Black Duck: The peak was 9 on 30 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SD).

Mallard: They were concentrated into large groups in Nov with 30,000 at Rathbun Res. on the 6th (BEn) and 70,000 at Riverton A. on the 25th (SD, BB). Despite these numbers, almost all other duck species went virtually unmentioned in reports this season. Were they not present or just not noteworthy?

Northern Pintail: The first report was 1 on 25 Aug at Big Creek L. (AJ)

Blue-winged Teal: 3,000 on 1 Oct on the Mississippi R. at Montrose (RCe) seems a strange location for this species to peak. Perhaps dry conditions diverted these birds from their normal fall haunts.

Canvasback: 25,000 at Montrose on 31 Oct is a normal number, but this year they departed almost immediately instead of lingering until ice arrives. Habitat destruction (loss of usual food sources) at this traditional and important staging area is almost certainly the cause (RCe). The only other report was of 21 on 26 Nov at Saylorville Res. (BEn).

Greater Scaup: Convincing detail was provided from three locations. One male and 2 fem. were at Big Creek L. on 29 Oct (SD details) [3rd earliest]; also early were 10 on 1 Nov at Montrose (RCe details); and 2 more were at West Okoboji on 21 Nov (THK details).

Oldsquaw: 1 imm. or fem. was at L. Manawa on 24 Oct (*AGG) [ties 3rd earliest]. Also early was 1 fem. on 26 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SD). Two fem. and 2 first-winter male birds appeared at Saylorville Res. (AJ) and another was at nearby Big Creek L. on 20 Nov (THK, SD). These birds peaked at 6 on 27 Nov and 3 were still present on 30 Nov (SD).

Black Scoter: 2 were at Lock and Dam 18 on 30 Oct (CF); 3 fem. or imm. birds were at Saylorville Res. on 1, 9 Nov (SD details).

Surf Scoter: 3 on 2 Oct (BEn details) [2nd earliest], 1 fem. or imm. on 1, 19 Nov (SD details), and 4 fem. or imm. on 4 Nov (JSi, BEn) were all at Saylorville Res. A single bird was at IPL Ponds on 26 Nov (*GWT) and another was at Coralville Res. on 29 Nov (*JF) [2nd latest].

White-winged Scoter: This species was widely reported beginning with 5 at Saylorville Res. on 29 Oct (SD details, MPr details); 2 birds were found n of Burlington on 30 Oct (CF), and at West Okoboji on 21 Nov (THK details, FLM). Singles were at Forney L. on 8 Nov (WRS), De Soto N.W.R. on 11 Nov (SD details), Warren Co. on 13 Nov (JSi, AJ), Rathbun Res. on 15 Nov (RLC), and L. Aiquabi on 26 Nov (AJ).

Common Goldeneye: 6 were at Saylorville Res. (BEn) and 2 more were n of Burlington (CF) on 29 Oct [3rd earliest]. No large numbers were reported.

Hooded Merganser: The peak counts were 154 at Saylorville Res. on 29 Oct (BEn) and 30 at Rathbun Res. on 30 Oct (RLC).

Common Merganser: 1 fem. was at Saylorville Res. by 19 Oct presaging a peak there of 8,000 on 30 Nov (SD); 400 were at West Okoboji the same day (ET).

Red-breasted Merganser: The peak report was only 12 on 19 Nov at Rathbun Res. (RLC).

Ruddy Duck: A female with a brood of 6 young was at Ventura M. on 4 Aug (Mike Hendrickson fide JLH). The peak report of 50 on 8 Nov at Montrose was considered a very low number for this location (RCe).

Turkey Vulture: 34 were feasting on dead fish at Forney L. on 12 Sep (BP). On 4 Oct, 80 birds were at Red Rock Res. (AJ).

Osprey: Reported from at least 3 E and C Iowa counties in August; the peak was 8 on 1 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SD, MPr, BPr). One brave bird was harassing and diving at an imm. Bald Eagle on 23 Oct at L. Manawa (BP).

Bald Eagle: 1 imm. on 11 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. was a migrant. Two birds fledged out of 3 hatched in Fremont Co. this summer (Carl Priebe fide WRS) and 1 ad. and 2 imm. were reported from various Fremont Co. locations during Aug and early Sep (BP, LP). The peak report was 7 ad. and 2 imm. at Lake Manawa on 30 Nov (BP).

Northern Harrier: A female was seen on 5 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD). The largest number reported was 9 at Riverton A. on 15 Oct (SD). A partial albino bird with white primaries was described at Brenton Sl. on 4 Nov (*JSi).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: First and peak were both at Grammer Grove with 1 on 28 Aug (MPr) and 73 on 30 Sep (BPr); 27 were counted in 3 hours at Saylorville Res. on 4 Sep (SD) and 14 were tallied between 7 a.m. and noon on 18 Sep in Webster Co. (JSi).

Cooper's Hawk: 1 adult carrying a thirteen-lined ground squirrel was at Union Slough N.W.R. on 1 Aug (JSi, SD). The peak was 12 on 25 Sep at Grammer Grove on 25 Sep (BPr). In Webster Co., 6 were counted on 18 Sep (JSi) and 6 more were seen there on 22 Sep (RLC).

Northern Goshawk: An immature bird on 18 Oct at Cedar Falls (DJC details) was the only report.

Red-shouldered Hawk: Single imm. birds were in Kossuth Co. on 11 Aug (MCK) and George Wyth S.P. on 30 Aug (RCe). Single adults were reported from Polk, Fremont, Hardin, Black Hawk, Pottawattamie, and Johnson counties during October and November.

Broad-winged Hawk: The first and peak reports were again at Grammer Grove with 1 imm. bird on 8 Aug (MPr) and 252 on 30 Sep (BPr). Only 3 other reports of more than 1 bird: 4 on 30 Aug at Waubonsie S.P. (BP); 119 on 17 Sep in Allamakee Co. (DJC); and 53 between 10:45 and 11:15 a.m. on 23 Sep in Mason City (JLW).

Swainson's Hawk: Many more reports than usual were received for this regular fall migrant. Peaks were 3 on 6 Sep in Fremont Co. (BP), 3 ad. and 2 imm. on 16 Sep in Kossuth Co. (MCK), and 4 adults on 1 Oct at Saylorville Res. (MPr, BPr, SD). Approximately 9 single birds were seen in 7 other W and C Iowa counties from 25 Aug to 23 Oct; 1 was in NE Iowa at Cedar Falls on 19 Oct (DJC).

Red-tailed Hawk: Peak reports were 37 on 30 Sep at Grammer Grove (BPr) and 62 the next day at Saylorville Res. (MPr, BPr, SD); 40 were counted in 3.5 hours from a blind in Cedar Falls on 21 Oct with 31 more in 6 hours the next day (DJC). Single Harlan's types were studied in Mahaska Co. on 10 Sep (RCe), in Polk Co. on 19 Oct (MPr details), and in Hardin Co. on 21 Oct (MPr details).

Rough-legged Hawk: Peak was 3 on 12, 19 Nov in Sioux Co. (JV).

Golden Eagle: An imm. bird pirated the Rock Dove being used for bait during raptor trapping at Red Rock Res. on 3 Oct (DJC details). Sounds like a good use for Rock Doves. An ad. was in Madison Co. on 6 Oct (EuA, EIA details). At Pickeral L., an ad. was seen 21 Oct and an imm. was there on 25 Oct (see photo by Kathy Bayer). November sightings included 1 ad. in the traditional wintering area in Allamakee Co. on the 18th (JF) and another in Cherokee Co. on the 22nd (MMB).

American Kestrel: 30 were seen in Lucas Co. on 1 Oct (DJC) and 1 raided a backyard feeder in Mason City on 22 Nov (JLW). Sounds like a good use for House Sparrows.



Merlin: This species was everywhere this fall. The first was 1 imm. or fem. at Big Creek L. on 2 Sep (SD) [ties 3rd earliest]. The peak report was the 3 or 4 birds present at Saylorville Res. on 1 Oct including one that buzzed the Red Phalarope and other shorebirds (MPr, BPr, SD); at least 1 bird was reported from Saylorville through 13 Nov (AJ, m.ob.); 2 more were seen fighting in Ames on 30 Oct (PM), or perhaps they were really "Cy" and "Herky" settling an old score! One or 2 birds were reported from 7 other counties between 2 Sep and 27 Nov.

Peregrine Falcon: 1 imm. eating a shorebird was studied at Union Slough N.W.R. on 28 Aug (SD details, JSi) [2nd earliest]. Like the Merlin, this species was reported frequently this fall with single birds in Warren, Cerro Gordo, Marshall, Polk, Black Hawk, Fremont, Buena Vista, Scott, and Clay counties between 14 Sep and 25 Nov. On 1 Oct, 5 ad. and 1 imm. were seen at Saylorville Res. migrating ahead of a major cold front (SD, MPr, BPr). A bird described at Fairfield on 30 Sep (*DCP) was most likely a pale colored imm. of the tundra race. When the axillaries are not seen, these birds can be confused with Prairie Falcons. An example of birding in style was eating dinner on the 16th floor of the Ruan building in Des Moines and looking out to see an ad. Peregrine chase a Rock Dove at eye level on 23 Nov (PM).

Prairie Falcon: One appeared early on 5 Sep at Big Creek L. (*SD) [3rd earliest]; another was at nearby Saylorville Res. on 14-15 Oct (*SD, BEn details); 1 was in Kossuth Co. on 23 Oct (*MCK). Another report was documented but will be referred to the Records Committee.

Wild Turkey: 10 on 30 Nov in Boone Co. (SL) was the only mention of this widespread and common introduced species.

Northern Bobwhite: 20 were at Fairfield on 18 Sep (DCP) and 1 in a yard in Sioux Center on 19 Nov was locally unexpected (JV).

Virginia Rail: 6 were at Union Slough N.W.R. on 1 Aug (SD, JSi).

Sora: The last were 2 on 15 Oct at Riverton A. (SD).

Common Moorhen: 3 ad. with 13 young were seen on 9 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, MPr). A juv. bird at Forney L. on 28 Aug presumably fledged there (WRS).

American Coot: The peak (and only) report was of 6,000 at Montrose on 1 Oct (RCe).

Sandhill Crane: 2 adults fed on arrowhead root bulblets at Lylah's M., Howard Co., on 5-9 Sep (MJH, MPr details, BPr). This would be a record early date for fall migrants but 2 adults were at this same spot in July (*IBL* 58:102). The only other reports were single birds on 25 Nov at Saylorville Res. (*RAU/PAI) and on 28 Nov at E. Okoboji (*ET).

Black-bellied Plover: Early birds were singles on 3 Aug at Hendrickson M. (EuA, EIA) [2nd earliest] and 5 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD) [ties 3rd earliest]. Peaks were 20 on 15 Aug in Osceola Co. (DCH) and 21 on 15 Oct at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK). Two birds lingered at Big Creek L. until 19 Nov (SD, JJD, MPr, RCe, all details) [ties latest].

Lesser Golden-Plover: The first and peak were at Union Slough N.W.R. with 2 on 28 Aug and 300 on 2 Oct (MCK); 175 more were at Hendrickson M. on 16 Oct (PM) and smaller groups were seen in three other C and W Iowa counties. One was seen and heard at Clear L. on 12 Nov (JLH); a single juv. bird was still at Forney L. on 23 Nov (*SD) [record latest].

Semipalmented Plover: The peak was 62 on 28 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, JSi) and the last was 1 on 21 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SD).

Piping Plover: The only report was 2 juv. on 17 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, ASF).

Killdeer: Hendrickson M. was the place to be with 337 on 11 Sep (HZ) and 300 on 17 Sep (PM).

American Avocet: The first and the last were found n of Burlington with 2 birds on 18 Aug (CF, JF) and 1 on 26 Sep (CF). The peak was 24 on 4 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SD). At Forney L., 3 were found on 26 Aug (BP) and 4-6 birds were present on 6-13 Sep (BP, TB, et. al.).

Greater Yellowlegs: 48 were counted at Cardinal M. on 30 Aug (MJH) and 1 was still at Big Creek L. on 27 Nov (*SD) [record latest].

Lesser Yellowlegs: An amazing 6,000 were at Union Slough N.W.R. on 28 Aug (SD, JSi), but no other large numbers were reported. A single bird, probably encouraged by its cousin above, hung on at Big Creek L. long enough to establish a late record by 12 days on 25 Nov (*SD, *AJ, m.ob.) [record latest].

Solitary Sandpiper: 168 were reported from Union Slough N.W.R. on 1 Aug (SD, JSi); the last one was still there on 2 Oct but was "dying, still standing, from a belly wound" (MCK). Another single was in Warren Co. on 7 Oct (JSi) [ties 3rd latest].

Upland Sandpiper: 4 were in Cerro Gordo Co. on 3 Aug near where a family group was seen on 24 Jun (JLW).

Hudsonian Godwit: The only report was of a juv. on 20 Oct at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK details) [2nd latest].

Marbled Godwit: One bird was on the Mississippi R. n of Burlington on 9 Aug (CF) [2nd earliest]. Only other report was from Union Slough N.W.R. where 1-2 birds were present 17-28 Aug (MCK details, SD details).

Ruddy Turnstone: One was n of Burlington on 2 Aug and 2 were there on 13 Aug (CF); 1 was at Union Slough N.W.R. on 9-11 Aug (MPr, SD, MCK) and a different bird was there on 17 Aug (SD, ASF); 3 were at Saylorville Res. on 22 Aug (SD); 1 was at Lylah's M. on 1 Sep (MJH); and the last was 1 in Appanoose Co. on 11 Sep (RLC).

Red Knot: An adult in breeding plumage was seen at Union Slough N.W.R. on 5 Aug (*SD).

Sanderling: The peak report was 39 on 22 Aug and last were 2 on 29 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SD). One to 4 other birds were found in Kossuth, Des Moines, Johnson, Jackson, and Polk counties between 1 Aug and 7 Oct.

Semipalmated Sandpiper: When you take the time to accurately count common birds you can find things like 550 on 9 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, MPr); the last were 14 on 27 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SD).

Western Sandpiper: 1-2 juv. birds were found at Bays Branch, Keg L. in Mills Co., and Fremont Co., all on 11 Aug (SD details). Single birds were at Hendrickson M. on 21 Aug (MT, AJ) and 25 Sep (SD details, ASF); and at Union Slough N.W.R. on 23 Aug (SD details, MCK). Two other reports will be referred to the Records Committee.

Least Sandpiper: 600 were reported at Union Slough N.W.R. on 17 Aug (SD, ASF). Yellowish legs were seen on 3 at Saylorville Res. on 16 Nov (SD details) [3rd latest].

White-rumped Sandpiper: The only report with conclusive detail for this unusual fall migrant was of 1 on 2 Sep at Union Slough N.W.R. (MCK, details).

Baird's Sandpiper: The peak was 70 on 28 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, JSi) and the last was 1 on 23 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SD, et al.)

Pectoral Sandpiper: These are common migrants but 11,800 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 5 Aug (SD) is a lot of birds. Many of the large peak numbers at this location may have been caused by little or no habitat elsewhere after the dry summer; 536 more were at Saylorville Res. on 14 Oct and the last were 2 there on 20 Nov (SD).

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper: A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Dunlin: The last report was also the peak, with 3 on 27 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SD details) [ties 3rd latest].

Stilt Sandpiper: 70 on 2 Aug (MCK) at Union Slough N.W.R. built to a peak of 320 on 28 Aug (SD, JSi). Last were 2 on 19 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SD).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: 64 were counted on 1 Aug (SD, JSi) at Union Slough N.W.R. and 77 were there on 17 Aug (SD, ASF); by 16 Sep these had declined to 16 (SD). One to 4 were reported Story, Des Moines, Greene, and Polk counties.

Short-billed Dowitcher: The only reports were from Union Slough N.W.R. on 17 Aug when 3 juv. were identified by feather patterns (MCK) while 69 more were calling "tu-tu-tu" (SD, ASF).

Long-billed Dowitcher: 3 on 18 Sep at Credit Is. made a single note "kek" (PCP); 52 at Saylorville on 2 Oct called "keek" (SD, ASF); the next day there, 15 juv. were identified by "thin edging on wing feathers and dusky gray breast" (THK). Excellent detail was also provided for 3 on 2 Nov at Saylorville Res. (SD). No details were given for 78 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 13 Oct (MCK), but by date they were presumably this species.

Common Snipe: Peak migration period was easily seen with 60 on 8 Oct at Dan Green Sl. (MMB), and 25 in Lucas Co. (RLC) and 400 at Riverton A. (SD) on 15 Oct.

American Woodcock: 1 was found dead in Sioux Center on 2 Nov (JV).

Wilson's Phalarope: The peak was 27 on 28 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, JSi).

Red-necked Phalarope: The peak was 38 on 28 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, JSi), and 18 were still there on 2 Sep (MCK). The last were there on 16 Sep (SD).

Red Phalarope: 1 showed up at Saylorville Res. on 30 Sep (*SD) and stayed through 3 Oct (*BE, *MPr, *BPr, *ASF photo, *JSi, *JJD, *THK, *AJ, *MT). This report awaits review by the Records Committee and would be the first substantiated (and long overdue) record for the state.

Jaeger species: A jaeger seen at Saylorville Res. on 16 Nov (*EIA) and 19 Nov (*ASF) was not identified to species.

Pomarine Jaeger: Two juv. birds were discovered at Saylorville Res. on 28 Sep (*SD) and were present through 2 Oct (*RKM, *THK photos, *PCP photos, *MPr, *BPr). Several observers were able to approach within 15 feet with a small boat. This would also be a first state record if accepted by the Records Committee and is much more unexpected than the Red Phalarope above.

Parasitic Jaeger: A report of a juv., which was seen at the same time as the Pomarines on 29-30 Sep (*SD), will be studied by the Records Committee.

Franklin's Gull: Unusual in E Iowa, 1 was n of Burlington on 28 Aug to 7 Sep (CF); 3,000 at Trumbull L. on 23 Sep (MMB) and 2,000 at Clear L. on 26 Sep (THK) were more expected; 1,000 at Saylorville Res. on 21 Sep grew to an incredible 60,000 by 1 Oct (SD). On the latter

date another observer (BEn) estimated only 20,000. Two were still at Saylorville Res. on 28 Nov (SD).

Little Gull: A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Bonaparte's Gull: This species also peaked at Saylorville Res. with 1,340 reported on 9 Nov (SD); 500 were still here on 25 Nov (AJ) and 88 were present at the end of the period on 30 Nov (SD). No large numbers were reported elsewhere.

Ring-billed Gull: Saylorville Res. attracted large numbers of gulls again this fall; 9,000 of this species were estimated on 15 Nov and numbers swelled to 13,500 by 30 Nov (SD).

Herring Gull: The first migrant was 1 second-year bird at Saylorville Res. on 5 Sep (SD, RAI, PAI). The peak was also there with 940 at the end of the period on 30 Nov (SD); 20 at L. Manawa, also on 30 Nov, (BP) were the most reported elsewhere.

Thayer's Gull: A report will be examined by the Records Committee.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: A report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Glaucous Gull: The only report was of a first- year bird at Saylorville Res. on 28, 30 Nov (SD details).

Black-legged Kittiwake: Three reports of single first-winter birds: at L. Manawa on 24 Oct (*BP, *AGG) [record earliest]; at Centerville on 26 Nov (*RLC); and at Red Rock Res. on 27-30 Nov (*AJ, *JSi, *JF, *MT, *CJB, *THK).

Sabine's Gull: A juv. bird was at Saylorville Res. on 20 Oct (*SD, *RKM).

Caspian Tern: The first migrants were 2 at Fairfield on 2 Sep (DCP). Peak reports were 100 on 7 Sep n of Burlington (CF); 100 on 26 Sep at Clear L. (THK); and 448 on 15 Sep at Saylorville Res. (SD) where 1 lingered until 23 Oct (BEn).

Common Tern: 2 ad. were at Saylorville Res. on 11 Aug, and the peak there was 4 juv. on 24 Aug (SD details). At this same location on 5 Sep, 2 ad. birds were feeding a juv. (SD details RAI, PAI). The one other location was n of Burlington, with 1-2 birds there on 24, 28 Aug and 26 Sep (CF). None were detected at Rathbun Res. this year (RLC).

Forster's Tern: 1 on 24 Sep at Rathbun Res. (RLC) and 19 on 2 Oct at Saylorville Res. (SD, ASF) were the only reports.

Least Tern: On 11 Aug, 2 ad. and 5 imm. were at the IPL Ponds where they had nested (SD), and the last 2 were there on 17 Aug (BP). Unusual in E Iowa, up to 6 birds were n of Burlington on 3-7 Aug (CF). One on 23 Aug was the first known record at Rathbun Res. (RLC). The only other report was of 3 on 28 Aug at Saylorville Res. (MT).

Black Tern: The only large group recorded was 85 on 17 Aug at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, ASF) and the last was also there on 20 Sep (MCK).

Ringed Turtle-Dove: One bird was present in Davenport from the beginning of the period on 1 Aug through 15 Nov (fide PCP); another has been present in Keokuk for the last several years (RCe).

Mourning Dove: 250 were found at Hendrickson M. on 28 Aug (PM), and 300 were at Lylah's M. on 1 Sep (MJH).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 1 on 10 Sep at Grammer Grove (MPr) was the only one mentioned.

Common Barn-Owl: 1 in Clay Co. on 16 Oct was studied as it roosted just before dusk (*DKa).

Burrowing Owl: A report without specific dates was received of a pair that nested at the Sioux Center fairgrounds and raised 3 young (JV).

Long-eared Owl: The first at Big Creek L. was 1 on 22 Oct (RAI, PAI); 2 were near Cedar Falls on 27 Oct (DJC); and 5 were at Bays Branch on 13 Nov (RKM).

Short-eared Owl: Single birds were reported from Cerro Gordo (JLW), Osceola (DCH), Lucas (BEn), and Guthrie (RKM) counties. The peak was 6 in Black Hawk Co. on 27 Oct (DJC).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: 3 reports of single birds on 23 Oct at Grammer Grove (MPr), 21 Nov in Davenport (PCP), and 25 Nov at Big Creek L. (AJ).

Common Nighthawk: The only mention of more than 1 was 96 on 8 Sep in Des Moines (RCe). The last was 1 on 14 Oct in Ottumwa (RCe).

Chimney Swift: 1,321 were counted going down the Fairfield High School chimney on 30 Aug and the next night there were 2,008 counted in 10 minutes. By 1 Oct, the last birds departed Fairfield, about two weeks earlier than usual at this location (DCP).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: The only reports were of 1 in Iowa City on 18 Aug (THK) and 2 in Boone Co. on 28 Aug (SL).

Red-headed Woodpecker: Described as "positively abundant" during late Aug and early Sep in Sioux Co. (JV).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: The peak was 3 in Howard Co. on 25 Sep (MJH) and Sioux Co. on 30 Sep (JV).

Pileated Woodpecker: 1 in Algona, Kossuth Co., on 23 Sep (MCK) was unusual while 1 on 18, 20 Nov in Emmet Co. was the first known area sighting (Neil Heiser fide DCH).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: The first was 1 on 6 Aug in Polk Co. (SD, ASF) and the peak was 4 on 2 Sep in Appanoose Co. (RLC).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: 1 was in Jackson Co. on 18 Aug (PCP, details); 2 were in Wapello Co. on 3 Sep (RLC); and 1 was in Warren Co. on 7 Sep (AJ, details).

Willow Flycatcher: 2 were in Wapello Co. on 3 Sep (RLC).

Least Flycatcher: The last were 2 on 16 Sep in Algona (MCK).

Eastern Phoebe: 1 at Saylorville Res. on 12-13 Nov (*AJ, SD details) is the record latest except for several winter records.

Great Crested Flycatcher: 1 was at George Wyth S.P. on 18 Sep (MCK).

Western Kingbird: 1 on 17 Aug at the IPL Ponds (BP) was at an expected location.

Horned Lark: None were found on 21-22 Nov on a similar route through NC and NW Iowa where 1,500 were found at the same time last year (THK).

Tree Swallow: 2,000 were massing on wires in Des Moines Co. on 20 Aug and an estimated 10,000 were at Union Slough N.W.R. on 28 Aug (SD, JSi).

Cliff Swallow: 600 were at Hendrickson M. on 17 Aug (HZ).

Barn Swallow: 66 were reported from Cass Co. on 29 Aug (MP).

Blue Jay: A flock of 247 "lifted out of the trees in a long drawn out line and headed south" from Algona on 14 Sep (MCK); 150 were migrating over Clear L. on 26 Sep (THK).

American Crow: The roost at the Iowa State campus in Ames was "larger than usual" by mid-Nov with 3,000 birds (JJD).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: The peak report was 6 in one tree on 4 Oct in Burlington (CF).

Brown Creeper: A total of 18 was seen between 27 Sep and 24 Nov in Mason City (JLW).

Rock Wren: A single bird was at Saylorville Res. during late Nov and early Dec 1986 and another showed up this year at a slightly different location, but still among the rocks. First discovered 8 Nov, it was last seen on 28 Nov (*SD) and was observed by many (*MPr, *AJ, *JF, *DCP, *RLC, *RCe).

Carolina Wren: This species continues to rebound with 3 birds heard calling all fall in Fremont Co. (IG); peak of 6 on 6 Aug in Lee Co. (RCe); and a single bird at Ledges S.P. on 25 Aug (AJ) and 9 Sep (JSi). Another bird from 13 Aug to 22 Nov in the Petersen's yard in Davenport was the first since 1978 (PCP, MLP). Another in Jackson Co. on 17 Aug was the first there in 4 years (PCP). Yet another showed up on 19 Aug and roosted on Kent's carport in Iowa City most of the fall (THK).

Winter Wren: The peak was 2 on 25 Sep in Lee Co. (RCe).

Marsh Wren: A flock of 12 migrating birds was in Sioux Co. on 14 Sep (JV).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: The first was 1 in Fairfield on 25 Sep and 30 were there on 25 Oct (DCP), while the next day "the trees were full of birds" in Emmet Co. (DCH).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: The first was in Fairfield by 20 Aug (DCP) [3rd earliest]. Several flocks of 50 birds were moving through Sioux Co. between 28 Sep and 2 Oct (JV) and 17 were at Algona on 7 Oct (MCK).

Eastern Bluebird: 79 were counted in Lee Co. on 2 Oct (RCe) and 21 were in one flock in Kossuth Co. on 25 Oct (MCK).

Veery: Most of the thrushes passed through undetected. This species was mentioned only from Marshall Co. with 1 on 22 Aug (MPr, BPr) and 2 on 8 Sep (BPr).

Gray-cheeked Thrush: None reported.

Swainson's Thrush: The only reports were singles in Sioux Co. on 28 Aug (JV) and Wapello Co. on 3 Sep (RLC).

Hermit Thrush: 2 in Iowa City on 3 Oct (THK) was the only report.

American Robin: The only large concentration reported was 300 in Appanoose Co. on 15 Oct. (RLC).

Gray Catbird: 35 were in Des Moines on 3 Sep (RCe).

Northern Mockingbird: The only report was 3 near Lacey-Keosauqua S.P. on 6 Oct (RCe, JPS).

Water Pipit: The peak reports were 10 on 8 Oct at Forney L. (BP, LP); 28 in Lucas Co. on 15 Oct (RLC); and 60 at Riverton A., also on 15 Oct (SD).

Northern Shrike: An adult showed up at Saylorville Res. on 29 Oct (SD details) and was seen again on 19 Nov (MPr details, DCP details). Single birds were also in Boone Co. on 12 Nov (RKM); Black Hawk Co. on 21 Nov (THK, FLM); and Red Rock Res. on 30 Nov (CJB details, THK).

European Starling: 50 birds were observed sailing with and around a Red-tailed Hawk for at least 30 minutes at Coralville Res. on 15 Oct (THK, CJB).

White-eyed Vireo: 3 were in Wapello Co. on 3 Sep (RLC).

Solitary Vireo: Very few reported in small numbers.

Warbling Vireo: 1 was still singing in Des Moines on 3 Sep (RCe) and another was in Algona on 16 Sep (MCK).

Philadelphia Vireo: Arrived very early this year with 1 on 4 Aug at Lylah's M. (MJH, details [record earliest] and another in Iowa City on 15 Aug (JF) [ties 2nd earliest].

Red-eyed Vireo: The peak report was 20 on 3 Sep in Des Moines (RCe, JCe).

Golden-winged Warbler: A female showed up at Union Slough N.W.R. on 9 Aug (SD, MPr) [2nd earliest], but there was little mention of this species elsewhere.

Tennessee Warbler: A summer record of this and several other warbler species (see *IBL* 58:104-105) presaged an early fall migration. A single Tennessee was singing at Union Slough N.W.R. on 1 Aug (SD, JSi) [record earliest] and 3 were there by 5 Aug (SD); 2 more were in Ames on 2 Aug (SD) [2nd earliest]. Also rather early was 1 on 9 Aug at Little Wall L. (MPr, SD). No large numbers were reported.

Orange-crowned Warbler: One was early on 26 Aug at Pine Lake S.P. (MPr details) [3rd earliest]. The only mention of more than single birds was "large numbers moving through 29-30 Sep" in Sioux Co. (JV).

Nashville Warbler: One on 1 Aug was at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, JSi) [3rd earliest]. Again, the only report of more than a few birds was "numbers moving through 29-30 Sep" in Sioux Co. (JV).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: The first migrant was at Union Slough N.W.R. on 9 Aug (SD, MPr). Usually more commonly seen in the fall, the peak was only 4 on 21 Aug at Grammer Grove (MPr).

Cape May Warbler: The first was a male in Ames on 2 Aug [record earliest] and the peak of 7 was also there on 22 Aug (SD). Singles were reported also from Warren Co. on 12 Sep (AJ) and Polk Co. on 18 Sep (PCP, MLP).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: 1 was in Colo on 21 Sep (HZ) and another was nearby in Ames on 24 Sep (SD).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: Sinclair termed this "one of the best fall migrations in several years." The first was 1 on 6 Aug at Lylah's M. (MJH details) [record earliest]; 140 were seen in the fog the morning after a 2 inch rain in Algona on 27 Sep (MCK); and 93 were in Lee Co. on 10 Oct (RCe).

Black-throated Green Warbler: The peak was 6 on 25 Sep in Lee Co. (RCe).

Blackburnian Warbler: An imm. male was in Ames on 2 Aug (SD) [record earliest], and 1 on 9 Aug was at Union Slough N.W.R. (SD, MPr) [2nd earliest].

Yellow-throated Warbler: 1 was reported from Warren Co. on 2 Sep (AJ).

Pine Warbler: A report of 1 ad. on 27 Sep in Dallas Co. "carefully noted an unstreaked back" (RKM). Another report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Prairie Warbler: One report will be referred to the Records Committee.

Bay-breasted Warbler: 1 was at Union Slough N.W.R. on 5, 9 Aug (SD) [record earliest]. Another was early in Iowa City on 19 Aug (JF).

Black-and-white Warbler: The first migrant was at Union Slough N.W.R. on 9 Aug (SD, MPr), and the peak was 3 birds on 21 Aug at Grammer Grove (MPr).

American Redstart: This species does not nest in the Croton Unit of Shimek S.F., Lee Co., so 1 on 6 Aug was a migrant (RCe).

Ovenbird: Peak was 6 in Sioux Co. on 30 Sep (JV).

Northern Waterthrush: 2 were at Union Slough N.W.R. on 5 Aug (SD) [ties record earliest].

Kentucky Warbler: The last was 1 at Saylorville Res. on 5 Sep (MT).

Connecticut Warbler: 1 imm. and 1 ad. were a bit early on 25 Aug at Ledges S.P. (AJ details, MT, BBr). Single birds were at Grammer Grove on 28 Aug (MPr) and in Warren Co. on 10 Sep (AJ).

Mourning Warbler: The peak was 3 at Union Slough N.W.R. on 30 Aug (MCK).

Hooded Warbler: A summering male in Lee Co. remained until 7 Aug (RCe).

Wilson's Warbler: This was yet another early arrival at Union Slough N.W.R. with 1 on 9 Aug (SD) [2nd earliest].

Canada Warbler: The peak was 4 on 20 Aug at Grammer Grove (MPr, BPr).

Summer Tanager: A female was at Geode S.P., Henry Co., on 28 Aug (CF); 2 were still in Waubonsie S.P. on 6 Sep (BP).

Blue Grosbeak: None were found during the period in Sioux Co. (JV). After nesting at IPL Ponds, a female was still there on 24 Aug (BP, LP).

Indigo Bunting: 16 were seen in Warren Co. on 25 Sep (AJ).

Dickcissel: One was still in Boone Co. on 6 Oct (SL).

Rufous-sided Towhee: "Spotted" race birds were in Warren Co. on 16 Oct (AJ) and at L. Manawa on 17 Nov (BP).

Clay-colored Sparrow: 1 was found in Webster Co. on 18 Sep (MPr).

Savannah Sparrow: The peak was 10 at Rathbun Res. on 15 Oct (RLC).

Le Conte's Sparrow: The only report of more than single birds was 2-5 at Big Creek L. on 9-15 Oct (MT, AJ).

Sharp-tailed Sparrow: Reported from 2 C Iowa locations in an 8-day span: 2 on 5 Oct at Hendrickson M. (MPr details, BPr) and 1-2 at Saylorville Res. from 7-13 Oct (CF, JF, AJ details, MT).

Fox Sparrow: The peak was 9 on 26 Oct in Warren Co. (AJ).

Lincoln's Sparrow: A single bird in a brush pile was singing on 28 Aug in Sioux Co. [record earliest] and good numbers arrived there by 8 Sep (JV). Also early were 2 in Webster Co. on 17 Sep (MPr).

White-throated Sparrow: 1 appeared almost a month early at Union Slough N.W.R. on 5 Aug [record earliest] and 1-2 were seen there several times in Aug (SD details MPr, ASF). Also early were 4 at Saylorville Res. on 5 Sep (MT). A careful count yielded 180 in Lee Co. on 10 Oct (RCe).

White-crowned Sparrow: Also arrived early with 1 imm. on 17 Sep in Webster Co. (MPr) [2nd earliest].

Harris' Sparrow: 1 imm. bird without a mask was seen in Warren Co. on 21 Sep (AJ) [ties 2nd earliest].

Dark-eyed Junco: The pink bill on 1 was studied from 15 feet on 16, 20 Sep in Algona (MCK) [2nd earliest].

Lapland Longspur: Few were seen this fall with a peak of 525 at Big Creek L. on 29 Oct (SD); 300 in Dickinson Co. on 20 Nov was the only flock seen in four days of birding in NC and NW Iowa (THK, FLM).

Snow Bunting: The first were 8 at Coralville Res. on 4 Nov (JF) and the peak was 21 at Saylorville Res. on 27 Nov (SD).

Bobolink: 18 on 2 Sep at Rathbun Res. (RLC) was the only report.

Eastern Meadowlark: 1 was still singing in Howard Co. on 7 Oct (MJH) and another was also singing on 24 Oct at Saylorville Res. (AJ).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: 50 males were counted at Union Slough N.W.R. on 18 Sep (MJH); 1 was alone with "thousands of Red-winged Blackbirds" at Big Wall L. on 26 Sep (AJ).

Rusty Blackbird: Arrived very early this year at several locations: 1 was bathing in a creek at Big Creek L. on 3 Oct (AJ details, MT) [2nd earliest]; 5 male and 3 fem. in "gorgeous fresh plumage" were at Union Slough N.W.R. on 4 Oct [3rd earliest], and 23 were there by 9 Oct. The peak was at this location with 400 birds in a feed lot with other icterids on 2 Nov (MCK).

Brewer's Blackbird: Details were provided for 1 on 30 Oct in Warren Co. (AJ, details), 2 males in Polk Co. on 22 Nov (SD details), and 1 fem. at Coralville Res. on 29 Nov (JF details).

Brown-headed Cowbird: 3,000 were at Coralville Res. on 3 Sep "in sorghum with a few red-wings, and the most ever seen" (THK).

Purple Finch: Very few reports with the first 6 on 22 Oct in Warren Co. (AJ). Only 1-2 reported at three other locations.

House Finch: Evidence of the growing abundance of this species are the reports from one Des Moines feeder. The daily average per day in Aug was 12; in Sep it was 5; in Oct it was 14; and in Nov it was 26 with a peak of 54 birds on 28 Nov (MT).

White-winged Crossbill: The only report was of 1 imm. from 13 Nov through the end of the period at a Mason City feeder (JLW).

Pine Siskin: Very few reports with only singles in 3 locations, except for 15 in Dallas Co. on 1 Oct (EuA, EIA).

House Sparrow: It's not often we have anything to say about this species, but a storm and 6 inch rain on 20 Aug killed an estimated 3,000 birds at a roost at Dordt College in Sioux Co. Maintenance workers had to rake up the carcasses and the event made the local television news (JV).

CONTRIBUTORS

* = documentation only

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OTHER OBSERVERS

Bart Ballard; Ann Barker (Davenport); Beth Brown (Osceola); John Cecil (Des Moines); Francis L. Moore (Waterloo); Loren Padelford (Bellevue, NE); Mary Lou Petersen (Davenport); and James P. Sandrock (Iowa City).

COMMENT

A total of 1,111 records was extracted from the reports of 48 observers and entered into a computer database for sorting and analysis. Ninety-three documentations for 37 different species were also received.

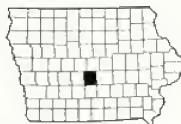
Most reports were very well done and were received on time, which made the job of compilation much easier. Also encouraging was that a greater number of the unusual, hard-to-identify, or early/late records were accompanied by some level of detail. This helps to show the observer was aware of the unusual species or dates and took the time to be certain of the identification. You can see the number of initials in the species summaries that are followed by "details." Unfortunately, a number of records had to go unmentioned when they were not accompanied by details.

It is interesting to consider how much the general trends mentioned at the beginning of this seasonal report were real and how much is related to observer activity. For example, many of the early warbler records were of 1 or 2 birds seen by a few observers at several locations. Their careful and diligent reporting is very important but it does not necessarily mean that entire warbler populations migrated early this year.

Also notice how many of the reports came from a few locations. Saylerville Res., for example, was the location of over 21% of all the records I extracted for entry into the database and Union Sl N.W.R. represented another 12%. Again, these numbers represent a lot of birding hours spent by a number of observers at these two popular spots.

RED PHALAROPE AT SAYLORVILLE RESERVOIR

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE AND BERY ENGBRETSEN



At 4:15 p.m. on 30 September 1988, we were near the north end of Saylorville Reservoir in Polk County studying a mixed flock of over one hundred shorebirds, mostly Pectoral Sandpipers and Long-billed Dowitchers. At a distance, one bird resembled a Sanderling because of the size, very white appearance, and bill shape, but the bird was too far away to make a positive identification. At 4:46 p.m., after approaching the bird, we identified it as a Red Phalarope. We studied the bird until 5:05 p.m. and noted the following as we studied the bird. It was roughly the size of a Pectoral Sandpiper and had a striking black-and-white appearance. The bird's color, general shape, and habit of swimming identified it as a phalarope. The underparts were entirely white, except for some light buff on the throat. When resting, the bird's wings were entirely dark and were darker than the rest of the bird. In flight, a light stripe extended the length of the wing. The mantle was light gray and was dappled with small, blotchy light brown areas. The back of the neck was darker than the mantle, and this dark color extended to the crown. The forehead was white. The rest of the head was also white except for a dark spot which included the eye. The bill was rather short, about the length of the bill of a Pectoral Sandpiper. The bill was dark, had a tubular look, and was tapered slightly towards the tip.

We believe this was a juvenile bird molting into first-winter plumage and photos of the bird clearly show the mottled upperparts and buffy neck characteristic of a juvenile Red Phalarope. This bird was observed by at least a dozen people through 3 October, but was not seen on later dates. This represents the first accepted record of this species in Iowa.

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6942 James Francis Pl., Johnston, IA 50131



Red Phalarope, Saylorville Reservoir, 1, 2 October 1988. Photos by S. J. Dinsmore and A. F. Fix.

POMARINE JAEGERS AT SAYLORVILLE RESERVOIR

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE



At 12:24 p.m. on 28 September 1988, I noticed a dark gull-like bird resting with Double-crested Cormorants above the dam at Saylorville Reservoir in Polk County. I quickly recognized the bird as a jaeger, but which one? During my initial observation of the bird, several things seemed to indicate that it was a Pomarine Jaeger. The bird's large size, heavy-bodied appearance, large head and bill, and prominent amount of white on the wing were consistent with Pomarine Jaeger. I watched the jaeger intermittently from 12:24 to 2:46 p.m. from Lakeview, Sandpiper Beach, and Cherry Glen recreation areas and noted the following. The bird was quite heavy-bodied and larger than nearby Ring-billed Gulls. It was mostly dark brown, except for a lighter crescent on each wing. The crescents were located at the base of the primaries and were visible on both upper and under sides of the wing. They were very prominent and visible even with the naked eye. The rump was slightly paler than the rest of the upperparts, and the tail had a hint of rufous near the tip. I went home that afternoon convinced that I had seen a juvenile Pomarine Jaeger.

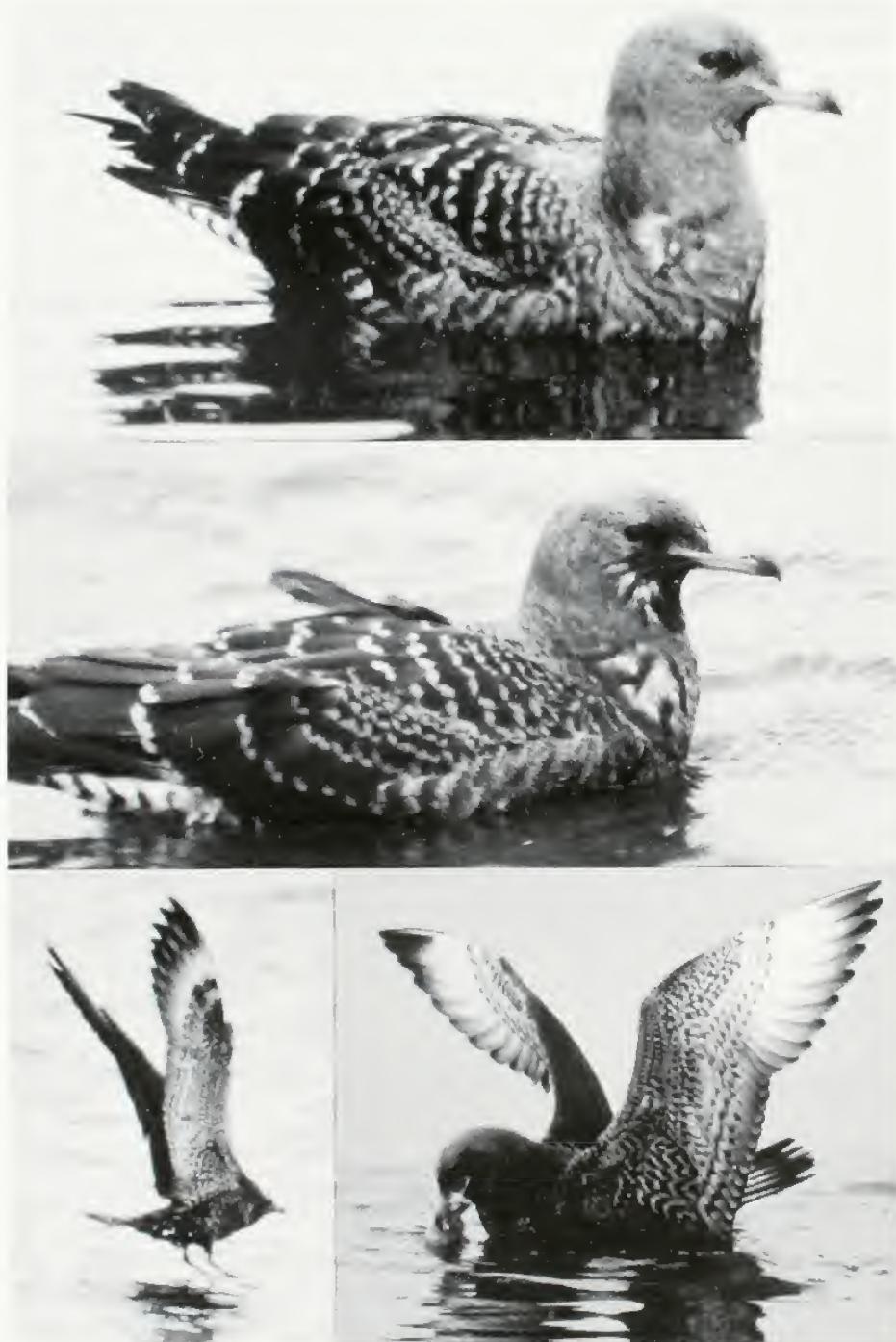
On September 29, I returned to the reservoir in hopes of finding the jaeger again. At 2:25 p.m., I located a jaeger off Cherry Glen. With the aid of my boat, I approached within 10 feet of the bird and took photos. I was impressed with the bird's bulky, large-headed appearance and the fact that the bird looked lighter than the jaeger seen the day before. The large size, combined with the large-headed appearance, prominent white wing crescents, and deep steady wing beats, convinced me that I was looking at another Pomarine Jaeger. Additional features noted included a heavy, hooked bill with distal third dark and basal portion gray, dark eye, dark legs, and smaller white crescent at the base of the under primary coverts.

At least two juvenile Pomarine Jaegers, and possibly three, were present at the reservoir through 2 October. Single unidentified jaegers were seen at the reservoir on 8 October and 9 November.

This the first record of Pomarine Jaeger in Iowa. Pomarine Jaegers are rare vagrants to the interior of North America, and are most often reported around the Great Lakes. In the last five years, there are records from Arkansas, Colorado (3), Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan (2), Ohio, Nevada, New York, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.



Pomarine Jaeger, Saylorville Reservoir, 30 September 1988. Photo by S. J. Dinsmore.



Pomarine Jaegers, Saylorville Reservoir. Top: 29 September by S. J. Dinsmore. Middle: 29 September by T. H. Kent. Bottom: 30 September by S. J. Dinsmore.

ROCK WREN AT SAYLORVILLE RESERVOIR

STEPHEN J. DINSMORE



In the early afternoon of 8 November 1988, I was birding the Cherry Glen Recreation Area of Saylorville Reservoir, Polk Co. At 3:08 p.m., I heard a distinctive "tick-ear" call coming from the rock rip-rap along the lake shore. I mentioned to Beth Brown, who had joined me, that it sounded like a Rock Wren. I quickly tracked the bird down and, sure enough, it was a Rock Wren. Beth and I watched the bird for about fifteen minutes and noted the following. The bird was definitely a wren because of the body shape, long tail, and bill shape. The bill was dark, thin, and very slightly decurved. The legs were dark. The bird was sparrow-sized, although there were no other birds for direct comparison. The upperparts were light gray with some lighter speckling on the back. The tail was buffy and contrasted with the color of the rest of the bird. The underparts were white with some blurry streaks on the flanks. Throughout the observation, the bird would alternately pause and bob up and down several times. This behavior is characteristic of Rock Wrens.

The bird was very cooperative and many birders saw it on the rock rip-rap between the two Cherry Glen boat landings through at least 28 November. This is the fifth state record in the last fifty years, the second from Saylorville Reservoir. The other record from this location was 22 November to 8 December 1986 (Padelford, L. and B. Padelford. 1987. Rock Wren at Saylorville Reservoir. *Iowa Bird Life* 57:62). It is interesting that both records from this location have been in late fall and the birds have frequented the rocky rip-rap along the lake shore. Perhaps regular checks of this habitat in late fall would produce more sightings of this species.

4024 Arkansas Dr., Ames, IA 50010



Rock Wren, Saylorville Reservoir, 9 Nov 1988. Photo by S. Dinsmore.

REVIEWS

Birds in Minnesota by Robert B. Janssen. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1987. 352 pp., hardbound \$35.00, paperbound \$14.95.

REVIEWED BY W. ROSS SILCOCK

In the early 1970s, when I first became interested in recording birding data, I marvelled at the concise way Imhof's *Birds of Alabama* summarized a large amount of data. As a birder, I found that these data could be used to pinpoint almost to the day when to look for a certain species. In 1975, after I had moved to Iowa, I began to collect arrival and departure dates not only from Iowa, but from neighboring states, with the aim of predicting more accurately when to look for certain species. Thus I was thrilled to see the new (in 1975) *Minnesota Birds*, written by Janet Green and Robert Janssen. Here was a book which was even more concise than Imhof's, presenting in brief but readable form the data needed for a birder to be able to pinpoint the best time to look for a given species. Because Minnesota is directly north of Iowa, I could expect to see birds a few days earlier or later than the dates given in this book. I felt that the basic strength of this book was its success in presenting as much information as it did without overwhelming the reader and in a form useful to the field birder interested in distribution, both temporal and spatial, of a state's birds. Thus, with a great deal of anticipation I opened a copy of the update entitled *Birds in Minnesota*, authored by Robert Janssen, this time in a solo effort. I was also a little fearful that the successful approach used in 1975 might in some way be changed, possibly for the worse; however, I was not disappointed. This new book was not a reprint with just a few new dates inserted, nor was it a radically altered version. Most of the species accounts, however, are revised and rewritten and reflect the author's dedication to up-to-the-minute record keeping and his extensive coverage of Minnesota's birding localities, many of which he and his birding colleagues have made famous.

The general outline of the new book is similar to that of its predecessor, including sections introducing the geography and geology of Minnesota, an introduction to the species accounts, and the accounts themselves. There are a few minor changes in the form of the new book, and one rather major change in emphasis. This involves the section entitled in 1975 "Geography and Ecology of Minnesota's Birdlife," which consisted of a standard summary of landscape regions, vegetation types, and lists of species of birds which were considered typical of each. This type of summary is useful but probably derives from the days when, in many cases, state bird books were written in a detached and objective manner. The new book is an example of the difference in emphasis seen when a local expert writes subjectively on his beloved state's birds and birding localities. Here, Kim Eckert provides a well-written and in places rapturous essay whose title indicates the difference between the two approaches: "Minnesota; unique geography, diverse habitats, rich avifauna." Eckert places much emphasis on Minnesota's specialty species, and, as he states, "Minnesota clearly emerges as one of the prime birding states visited by birders from across the country."

A useful feature of the book is the inclusion of range maps. These are limited to illustrating breeding ranges in Minnesota, and provide interesting data, especially for Iowans and others living in adjoining states.

The only information which I feel might contribute to the usefulness of this book is a brief notation describing the preferred habitat for each species. With this information, this book would provide not only the "when", but also the "where", pinpointed a little more than merely at a county level. Of course, an obvious solution is to use Eckert's *Birder's Guide to Minnesota* in conjunction with Janssen's book, although I believe that species-by-species habitat briefs would enhance Janssen's book as a single source.

Janssen uses up to five dates to indicate times of arrival and departure. In Iowa, the tendency has been to ascertain the earliest and latest three dates. These data to me suggest only extreme statistical events, and I think it is important that the most likely time to see a given species may be some time after or before the dates presented. I believe a system of presenting early and late dates would be more useful if it was expanded so that not only the first few recorded dates are given, but the series should be continued until a cluster of dates is reached, indicating a statistically reliable arrival date. For example, "April 1, 4, 9" is less meaningful than "April 1, 4, 9, 10, 11, 11". One can deduce that the best time to go out expecting to find this species is April 10 or so, not April 1 or April 4, when the species may be rare or even accidental.

Janssen's *Birds in Minnesota* is definitely a book "by birders, for birders", filling this niche extremely well. It is well-written, virtually typo-free (except for an unfortunate switch of captions for Greater Prairie-Chicken and Sharp-tailed Grouse in the color-picture gallery of Minnesota specialties), and I consider it to be indispensable for anyone who has any interest whatsoever in Minnesota birdlife (which I assume to include any birder operating in Iowa!).

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Nebraska Birds: Breeding Status and Distribution by James E. Ducey. Omaha: Simmons-Boardman Books. 1988. 148 pp, paperbound \$19.95.

REVIEWED BY JAMES J. DINSMORE

This book summarizes breeding records of all birds known to have nested in Nebraska. For each of the 252 species considered, there is a brief statement on its nesting status followed by a list of the counties from which there are nesting records for three periods: pre-1920, 1921-1960, and post-1960. Maps show the counties in which each species has nested for each time period. Ducey has done a thorough job of digging out old records and for that reason alone, this is a valuable contribution. He includes many nests found by early explorers, scientists, and zoologists, information that is difficult to locate. My main criticism is the timing of this book. With the Nebraska atlas project now underway, the post-1960 maps will be obsolete as soon as that project is completed. Still the data presented here provide a good historical background for the atlas. Twenty-five black and white bird drawings by Paul Johnsgard help liven the book.

The Birder's Handbook by Paul R. Ehrlich, David S. Dobkin, and Darryl Wheye. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1988. 785 pp. paperbound \$14.95.
REVIEWED BY JAMES J. DINSMORE

This book attempts to supplement field identification guides by providing birders with information on the biology of 650 species that regularly nest in North America. The book is almost two books that are cross-indexed to each other. Species accounts are on the left-hand pages, two species per page, while the right-hand pages have short essays (about 260 in all) about birds, their biology, people who study birds, and various other ornithological topics.

Each species account starts with a pictorial key showing the nest site, nest type, egg color pattern, clutch size, incubation and fledging periods, usual diet, and foraging method. Next, a brief paragraph gives more detailed information about each species. Page references to essays that are pertinent to the species and several literature references are listed at the end of the paragraph. The essays are short and give a good synopsis of their topic (e.g., drinking, urban birds, molting, color of eggs, John James Audubon). They are up-to-date and provide an interesting supplement to the species accounts. The essays are cross-indexed so the reader can explore a topic further.

Several features of this book impress me. First, it is packed with an amazing amount of information. The species accounts provide a good summary of the breeding biology of the species, including pointing out where no information is available. For birders who want to know more about a species, this is a good place to start. Second, the information is current. Most of the references are from the 1970s and 1980s, including some from 1988. My perusal of species I am familiar with indicated that the authors had read the most recent articles on those species. Finally, the essays are a lively addition to the book. With the variety of topics covered, there should be at least a few essays that will interest anyone who enjoys birds. In sum, I think that this book accomplishes its goal of going beyond the field guide very well. It is a useful reference that I will carry with me along with my field guides.

4024 Arkansas Drive, Ames, IA 50010

I.O.U. BUSINESS

FALL BUSINESS MEETING

Dayton, 17 September 1988, 3:10 to 4:30 p.m.

ANN M. BARKER, SECRETARY

Presiding: Jim Dinsmore, President

Minutes:

The minutes of the Fall 1987 meeting at Luther were approved as published in *Iowa Bird Life* (motion by Carol Thompson, seconded by Francis Moore). The minutes for the Spring 1988 Mason City meeting were summarized. These will be published in the next issue of *Iowa Bird Life*. The president will call for their approval at the Spring meeting.

Reports

Treasurer: Francis Moore reported that the current checking account balance is \$4,457.81. In addition, CDs are held totalling \$11,000.00. The budget has been approved, and Dinsmore indicated the organization is in sound financial shape.

Records Committee: Pete Petersen stated that the committee met in July in Iowa City. Several old records were re-evaluated as well as some new ones. The committee has recommended to the Board that Ray Cummins be appointed to fill the immediate vacancy created by the resignation of Bob Myers. In addition, it recommended that Bob Cecil be appointed to the committee in 1989 for the term ending in 1995, replacing Pete Petersen.

Publications Committee: Dinsmore reported that the newsletter is on schedule. Material is needed for the next issue which will be assembled around mid-November. The 1988 summer issue of *Iowa Bird Life* is out. The editor has indicated that he too has a continual need for material. Book reviews will be published in each issue. Bob Myers has resigned as the Spring Field Reports Editor. The Editor has appointed Steve Dinsmore to fill the position, subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

Membership Committee: Francis Moore indicated that the committee has not met. The membership brochure has been reprinted.

Library/Historical: Dinsmore reported that this committee also has not met. The records of William Youngworth have been received and will be donated to Iowa State University Library.

Education Committee: Dinsmore reported for Linda Zaletel that ideas have been collected for a curriculum package and writing is in progress. It should be finished by the Spring meeting.

Breeding Bird Atlas Committee: Thompson related that Doug Reeves, a leader in this project, has left Iowa. The committee plans to meet this winter to evaluate the status of the project. They are still looking for funding for publication of the results. Cards for blocks done this summer are due and should be sent to Carol Thompson. In general, 1988 has been the best of any in terms of the coverage across the state. This committee will have another report at the Spring meeting.

Nominating Committee: Dinsmore appointed Darwin Koenig, Hank Zaletel, and Pete Petersen to nominate a slate for the offices of President and Vice-president and three Board positions for the Spring meeting. Dinsmore urged members to let the committee know of any suggestions they might have.

Old Business : none

New Business

Future Meetings: A proposal has been received from the Quad City Audubon Society to hold the Spring 1989 meeting in Davenport on 19-21 May. The Board has reviewed and approved the proposal. It was moved (Marlys Huff, seconded by Bob Cecil) to accept this proposal. The motion passed. A site is still needed for the Fall 1989 meeting. Harold White from Estherville indicated an interest in hosting the meeting in the Spirit Lake region. He will look into this further. The Spring 1990 meeting, a joint venture with the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology and the Minnesota Ornithologists' Union, is set for May 17-20 at LaCrosse. Dinsmore and Bendorf attended a planning meeting recently. Preliminary plans are to hold an overnight field trip starting on Thursday. The banquet speaker will probably be someone regionally or nationally known. Both Wisconsin and Minnesota usually have several hundred people at their meetings. This will be an excellent opportunity for Iowa birders to meet and learn from birders of other areas. Information from the tri-state lati-long project will be gathered in time for the meeting. For more details, see Fred Lesher's article in the Fall 1988 I.O.U. News.

Pete Petersen asked about the availability of arm patches and decals for I.O.U. Moore indicated that these will be available after the meeting.

The birdline has moved. Bob Cecil has moved from Keokuk and the project is now in the hands of Jim Fuller in Iowa City. A hearty round of applause for Bob Cecil reflected the I.O.U.'s gratitude. The new birdline number is 319-338-9881. Fuller indicated that reports are desperately needed. Regular updates will still be made on Monday. A new recording machine became necessary and additional expenses were incurred in moving. The birdline needs donations.

Dinsmore brought with him a larger selection of I.O.U. T-shirts. These will be for sale for \$6.50.

Dinsmore thanked our host for this weekend's meeting, the Upper Des Moines group of the Iowa chapter of the Sierra Club. The group did an excellent job of putting on the meeting, and they received a round of applause.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Dayton, 18 September 1988 12:00 p.m.

ANN M. BARKER, SECRETARY

Members present: Jim Dinsmore (presiding), Eugene Armstrong, Ann Barker, Bob Cecil, Francis Moore, Jim Sinclair, Carol Thompson.

Minutes: The minutes for the meeting held 21 May had been mailed to all board members for review. It was moved (Cecil, seconded by Armstrong) to approve the minutes. The motion passed.

Reports:

Records Committee: Two nominees were considered for appointment to the committee: Ray Cummins to serve in an immediate vacancy created by the resignation of Bob Myers (motion by Moore, seconded by Cecil; passed) and Bob Cecil to serve a term beginning in Spring 1989 replacing Pete Petersen (motion by Barker, seconded by Armstrong; passed). The committee requested funds for duplicating photos to develop a working file of records for committee to use in its work. The Board agreed in principle to this idea and asked for a more detailed proposal of funds needed. The committee recommended a change in its bylaws (see *Iowa Bird Life* 56:111). The recommended change was to add to the qualifications for committee membership that the person should have a record of submitting well-written and researched documentations of birds in Iowa. The Board discussed the proposal and was concerned that it might exclude those who do not have an opportunity to get out in the field, but who might otherwise be well-qualified. A motion was made (Cecil, seconded by Thompson) to approve the change. On a split vote, the motion failed.

New Business

Future meetings: Spring 1989: The Board voted unanimously by mail to accept the invitation from the Quad City Audubon Society to hold the Spring 1989 meeting in Davenport on 19-21 May. Fall 1989: Harold White, Estherville, plans to submit a proposal to hold the Fall 1989 meeting in the Spirit Lake area. The Board will meet in late fall or January to consider this proposal. Spring 1990: Dinsmore and Bendorf recently attended a meeting in LaCrosse to plan for the Tri-state meeting. They expressed some concern about the organization and shared input from the three states in planning to date. The Wisconsin Society for Ornithology normally advances \$300 to their local committee to organize their meetings; the money is repaid from registrations. They suggested that they would like the same contribution from the other host organizations for this joint meeting. A motion was made (Cecil, seconded by Thompson) that, if asked, Dinsmore be authorized to put up \$200 from the I.O.U. as seed money. The motion carried.

I.O.U. T-shirts: Thirty have been sold so far and a few more may be ordered in smaller sizes.

Bird Line: The recorder for the bird line wore out this summer. Dinsmore authorized Cecil to purchase a new machine without board approval because of time limitations. There were also some expenses incurred in moving it to Iowa City.

Dinsmore received an invitation to the I.O.U. to join the International Council for Bird Preservation. Thompson suggested that he put more information about this organization in the newsletter.

A short discussion was held about the bird list compilation at I.O.U. meetings. Some board members felt that there should be a limit to the distance covered for birds to be included on the list. There was some sentiment that the compilation should include only birds seen on regularly scheduled field trips.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

FROM MATT KENNE

My birding has become a form of quiet competition. They say that it's just a phase in the evolution of a birder, that it's a necessary sharpening of the skills needed for later advancement into behavioral and biological studies. That's all well and good, but all I know is, right now I get a little burst of pride when I see my initials ahead of Steve Dinsmore's occasionally (Does he ever take time off to sleep?). If there really is a point to finding the largest flock of Black-bottomed Mudskippers, or the first Invisible Stick-Bird on migration, I haven't figured it out yet, but I'll keep looking. That's part of the fun.

My very first issue of *Iowa Bird Life* contained your revised list of early and late dates. This list, and *Iowa Birds* before it, have pushed me through the first stages of casual bird watching to the more intense levels of bird finding, a challenge I enjoy very much. The idea that someone else might actually care what I've got in my scope on a given day has really transformed the way I look at the birds I find. The concentration on detail and depth of observation needed to make successful impressions on the Records Committee (Their Royal Highnesses, Lords of the Realm, Protectors and Keepers of the Faith, etc.) has, I hope, carried over to the way I look at that Robin, Starling, or Junco in my yard. Writing the quarterly report has become as enjoyable a trip as the real thing, filled with fine memories and great weather at my kitchen table.

In the Fall 1988 issue of *Iowa Bird Life* you repeated your call for input on the effectiveness of our magazine, so here are a few observations after my first four issues: I'm a new kid on the block, so what's our position on color photographs? I assume that color is beyond our budget, but it does turn a nice informative journal into a striking document. Dinsmore's swans in the Fall 1988 issue would have been really impressive on blue water instead of gray! I'm a big fan of maps, so I really enjoyed the vagrant studies. I don't envy the work involved in producing them, but I hope to see more of them in the future, perhaps Gilbert's Frigatebirds and Red Phalaropes? Could the reports of different meetings make their way into the newsletter where they'd be more current? This would make more space for articles. Which brings us to the final, most important point for all readers: Write something! Bad prose among friends is far better than begging for a minimum 28 pages every issue. A.B.A.'s *Birding* has started a column called "The Joy of Birding" to tell the tales that have to be told. I'd like to see an article (or two) every issue containing members' best bird stories, Big Days, recognition of friends who identified a rare stump or clod of dirt, speeches, sermons, and tasteful lies. We could lighten and brighten a sometimes slightly-too-dry *Iowa Bird Life* by remembering how much fun it is to be out in the cold, wet wind at a ridiculous hour of the morning, sharing with friends the sights and sounds that others don't even know exist.

Iowa Bird Life has helped my rookie year in the I.O.U. be a great one, and I hope we can continue to grow in the future. Thanks!

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